

From the Desk of
Larry Alley
517 Quail Nest Rd
Winfield, Kansas 67156

February 9, 2015

Bill: Fall Elections

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

I am in favor of moving City Council and School Board elections to November in the even years, and all other April elections to November in the odd years.

I was on the school board for USD 396 from 1987 to 1997, and I have run for the State Representative position for District 78 and 79 in 2012 and 2014 as a Republican. In 2010 I was recruited to run for the 78th District as an independent due to no one filing for the position, and I believed we needed a choice at the ballot box for such an important position.

The first reason I support the change in City Council and School Board is to encourage more candidates to run for these positions. I believe the citizens of our communities need a choice of who will represent them in these important positions. It has been my experience that in local elections in our smaller communities the candidates are recruited by the Local Boards and Councils and encouraged to run. *(I was recruited to run for school board in USD 396 and most recently here in Winfield by members of the Administration and Local Board).* Most of the time once the recruited candidate files no one else will file for the position and the candidate runs unopposed. The recruited candidate is most likely to be of the same positions as the existing administration and board, thus another vote for the status quo of the Board and Administration. By moving the election date to the fall it is my hope more candidates will be aware of the election and get involved.

A second reason for my support of the change is a fall election will have better voter turnout, thus more voters will actually choose who they support to represent them in these important positions. In our smaller communities it is not unusual for less than 100 votes to elect our board members, due to low voter turnout. It is my opinion that a fall election will bring out more voters thus more of the community will be involved in electing those that will serve.

My most important reason is from my school board experience. When one is elected in April you take office in July, the first meeting the Board votes on the School Budget. I like most new board members had reviewed the budget before hand, however did not understand all that went into making up the budget. Usually new members vote for something they don't fully understand as did I. If members took office in January they would have a full 6 months to gain the experience before having to cast their ballot for that important vote on how they will spend the communities tax dollars.

Sincerely,

Larry Alley

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